



LIVING GREEN

Environmental Plan 2014-2020

How Can We Live Greener?

Council's Environmental Plan (Towards One Planet Living 2008-2013) is coming to its final stages and is due to be replaced with new directions to guide Council in environmental management.

There have been many achievements up to now, and we are keen to further develop our reputation as an environmentally progressive Council. In this early stage of consultation we are seeking feedback on what issues and actions are important to our community.

OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT

OUR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Tell us what's important to you about these topics...

Visit the online project page titled 'Living Green – Environmental Plan' and join the online discussion or complete a submission form.

www.yoursaycharlessturt.com.au

Consultation closes 6 December 2013.



Our Approach

A community driven approach is being taken to develop the Living Green Plan via ideas gathering, workshops on developing actions, and detailed discussions.

Initial conversations with 20 people including community interest groups, Council staff and State Agencies, helped determine the themes and preliminary ideas for the Living Green plan. These need to be tested and expanded by consultation with the broader community, as well as considered in detail for determining how ideas can grow into reality.

The Challenge

Initial discussions highlighted the importance of links between environmental issues, the local community and the local economy. They covered topics from the built environment to community gardens to advocacy with the State and Federal governments to local economies and the natural environment. Similarly the links between water and energy management, climate change, biodiversity and waste were highlighted. Our challenge is to develop a plan which respects these inter-dependencies.

Based on this, a structure which focuses on people, buildings and the natural environment is proposed while covering the environmental pillars of biodiversity, water, energy and waste.

The Process

2012 - 'Imagine Tomorrow' Community Plan Consultation & Development

The input from the Community Plan showed a strong interest in environmental issues within the community, particularly in areas of transport and biodiversity. Similarly, the community has a growing expectation for Council to act as an advocate and partner on issues within the environmental arena.

Now - Living Green Plan Ideas Gathering

We ask for your input to help us grow the environmental directions for the City of Charles Sturt. What issues are you aware of? What actions should we consider taking?

Feb 2014 - Actions Development Workshops

We'll hold workshops with the community and within Council to determine how the ideas gathered can be developed into actions.

April 2014 - Draft Living Green Plan

A Living Green plan will be available for consultation.





Themes

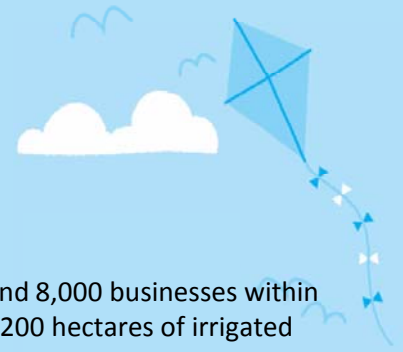
The structure of the Living Green Plan aims to support the City of Charles Sturt Community Plan which firmly puts our people first. It also aims to incorporate the links between a range of environmental issues and activities within its structure.

The table below shows the themes which will make up the Living Green Plan and the types of topics that will be covered.

Theme	Covers topics of:
Our Built Environment	Energy and water efficiency upgrades - Council buildings & residential & businesses Alternative energy sources - Council buildings & residential & businesses Development related issues Waste & recycling services Stormwater capture – recharge & selling
Our People and Communities	Supporting local economies – working with local businesses Supporting local action & local community involvement Transport related issues Adapting to climate change Community gardens / local food production Open space provision Community & business education Advocacy
Our Natural Environment	Biodiversity improvement & management Water quality – beaches, wetlands, River Torrens Contaminated soils & groundwater



OUR BUILT ENVIRONMENT



How can we live better?

The City of Charles Sturt is an urban environment with over 44,000 households and 8,000 businesses within an area of around 56 square km. Council itself owns over 200 buildings and over 200 hectares of irrigated areas, including 160 ha of open turf area and 53 ha of sporting grounds.

Each and every building and home uses water and energy, as well as depending on its waste being managed or removed properly.

Some issues already raised

- Government incentives for energy and water efficiency have largely been reduced or removed.
- Energy and water efficiency opportunities have been identified and implemented at various Council buildings but many other opportunities exist.
- Many Council owned premises are leased to tenants (such as sports clubs or community groups) who pay the energy bills. This reduces the financial incentive for Council to upgrade buildings as Council must pay the (potentially high) cost of upgrades without gaining a direct financial benefit.
- Streetlights are a big energy user across the community. They are installed and maintained by SAPN (SA Power Network) with Council having limited control or influence in types of technologies used.
- Council and the community will need to prepare for changes to the climate such as increased number and intensity of heat events and sea level rise. We need to understand what issues are likely to occur in the region and what actions can be undertaken to mitigate and/or protect the community and its assets. The anticipated climate changes may lead to human and environmental health concerns which could range from low to catastrophic consequences and therefore need adequate planning.
- Recycling services are generally high quality, with Council needing to continue its services as well as addressing waste management of multi-unit dwellings, working to provide services for difficult wastes (such as mattresses) and continuing to work on improving recycling rates including food waste.
- Zero Waste, the State agency responsible for creating consistent messaging and undertaking research on waste, may lose funding within 2 years meaning coordinated and consistent messaging on waste issues may become far more difficult for Council to access.

Things we could do

- Provide targeted information, on-site services and support to local businesses and residents on energy, waste and water efficiency i.e. through training programs, access to expert advice, demonstration sites.
- Help local clubs become more energy and water efficient particularly as this can help them via lower bills in the longer term.
- Fast-track the Green Building program across Council premises to improve outcomes on energy, water and waste across Council's own buildings.
- Develop a more coordinated and stronger role in advocating and lobbying on issues of importance to, or which impact on, our community e.g. for use of more efficient streetlights at a reasonable cost; for coordinated waste messaging and planning at State level; for greater community input to changes to the Development Act.
- Create closer ties with existing groups or locations to provide community information on a range of sustainable living opportunities.
- Continue to improve our waste service by expanding food waste collection, continuing to improve recycling rates at higher density developments, and continuing to explore options to reduce the overall cost of waste services to the community.
- Work closely with other Councils (including the WasteCareSA group) to deliver consistently high quality and best value waste and recycling services".

OUR PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES

How can we work together?

We have 108,000 residents from over 100 different cultures; approximately 37,000 people working within the City of Charles Sturt and countless visitors from other parts of Adelaide comprising our community. Our schools, sporting clubs, recreation groups and community volunteers create a social fabric that strengthens our community.

The input on our Community Plan and early discussions on this Living Green Plan show that our community is concerned about environmental issues. However community well-being and local economic development are issues which are also raised in the context of environmental management.

Some issues already raised

- Public transport access, frequency of service and routes continue to be issues for our community as well as neighbouring councils. Council can play a direct role in amenities around public transport routes but generally has a very limited role in the provision of transport services.
- Great cycling routes exist but cycling can still feel challenging for commuter and recreational cyclists.
- Interest in food crops within public reserves has been expressed by people but where and how we can grow these is a possible issue.
- Some active community garden groups exist and there may be opportunities for others across Council.
- Sectors of the community have a high interest in working to develop community actions whether food swaps, community gardens, caring for biodiversity sites or other activities. The extent of Council support for these has been perceived as limited or, at times, inappropriate. There is a high level of interest in community ability to improve its surrounds and neighbourhoods but a lack of consistency in how Council reacts to, or supports these.
- Council has limited ability to influence some issues which directly or indirectly affect its community, such as major developments, public transport planning, and the manner in which the State Government's Waste Levy and NRM (natural resource management) levy funds are expended.
- New communities are being created and will need to be incorporated into Council in a positive manner, particularly at major medium-high density developments such as St Clair, Woodville West, Cheltenham, AAMI Stadium.

Things we could do

- Consider ways to facilitate or create community based advocacy group(s) to identify actions and lobby State Government and agencies on issues of community importance, such as better transport options.
- Improve knowledge and interest in environmental community action and involvement, through programs such as a 'thinker's in residence' program and targeted projects across a range of demographics such as youth, older people, new migrants, families with school age children.
- Promote and support the development of community gardening practices, whether informal (such as quick action gardening in smaller public spaces, vertical greenspace development) or formal (community garden groups and public spaces used for food crops).
- Create closer links with our community and programs such as 'Our Patch' to establish groups which care for native areas to support groups which look at broad community action in sustainable living.
- Consider establishing a Green Areas or Green Businesses program which promotes and supports existing and new businesses with an environmental or sustainability focus.
- Use mobile technologies and apps to better work with our community on issues such as identifying illegal dumping or weed issues or putting like-minded people in touch with each other.
- We can work with likely transport hubs such as schools and businesses at Henley, Grange, Queen Street and St Clair, to promote safe and pleasant routes as well as creating great walking and cycling destinations through developing amenities and services.

OUR NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

How do we care for our environment?

Council has 11.5kms of coastline and 20km of creek lines as well as aquifers throughout our area. The area is home to native species of plants, particularly along the coastline. These species are being lost with the introduction of plants from overseas and other parts of Australia as well as weed encroachment caused by the substantially urban nature of our area. Council uses native and exotic plants and has started a biodiversity team to maintain some areas.

The City has seen historical works and site uses which have left us a legacy of contamination in our soils and groundwater that needs to be dealt with now.

Some issues already raised

- Dune areas appear to be seeing higher levels of weed encroachment and highly damaging weeds due to increased use and construction of public spaces along the foreshore.
- Wetland developments and other biodiversity areas require specialised management which is different to traditional open space management.
- Local provenance species may be at risk of disappearing without proper management and propagation.
- Water quality issues are emerging both in groundwater contamination and stormwater pollution in creeks and along the coast, with Council having the State's first proscribed area for groundwater extraction.
- Stormwater systems, and therefore wetlands and other methods for aquifer capture and storage are likely to need to deal with more intense but rarer rainfall events.
- Groundwater salinity has been increasing and is likely to continue to do so.
- Historical land use has caused soil contamination issues across some areas of Council, with these becoming an issue particularly when new developments or work is occurring at sites.

Things we could do

- Continue to conserve and protect the heritage and biodiversity of the Tennyson Dunes via appropriate planning, on-ground work and supporting community action.
- Seek to partner with State agencies and research institutions to better understand, communicate about and develop solutions to soil and groundwater contamination.
- Expand our already high use of local provenance plants in landscaping in both Council plantings and within private gardens (i.e. creating a formal garden setting using local plants).
- Expand on-ground staff expertise for biodiversity site management to expand biodiversity sites and more actively support community groups who want to look after biodiversity sites, including dunes, wetlands, creek lines and RTLP and at public reserves.
- Create policies and plans on how and when open space is converted to native plants, whether formal or informal landscaping.
- Work closely with our community on managing weed plants across the City.
- Explore and understand opportunities for community-scale stormwater capture and continuing wetland development to slow down and reduce storm flows into the Gulf and increase aquifer recharge with fresh water.



Feedback Form

What other environmental issues or actions should we consider?

What other environmental initiatives would you like to see happening?



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Any other comments?

Join the mailing list – provide your name, address and email below:

Return the feedback form to:
Environment Management Officer
City of Charles Sturt
PO Box 1, Woodville SA 5011

Or fill in a submission form online:

www.yoursaycharlessturt.com.au

under 'Living Green – Environmental Plan'

Call Kaarina on 84081111 if you have any questions about this project.



Consultation closes 6 December 2013